1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

848 613 children are abhorred and every effort is made to get the woman married should she be pregnant. Although her shame is great, it is nothing compared to the problems that the new individual will encounter unless people come to accept his mother's agnatic kin group as his—and whether that group will in fact accept him as a member. The pariah status of illegitimate children is easily seen in the widespread belief that they can only marry others like themselves or people of slave status.

59 So much then for the first two features of kinship, those of genealogy and descent. The third aspect, that of marriage relations, brings us much closer to what is commonly thought of as family life in western society. Using the anthropological jargon, we can sum up the kinds of relations invoked by a Kanuri marriage by saying that Kanuri marriage is polygynous with virilocal residence patterns which have a patrilocal emphasis and an exceptionally high divorce rate. In plain English this means that the men can marry more than one wife, up to four by Islamic law (they are polygynous); the wife invariably leaves her home to go and live with her husband in a place chosen by him (they are virilocal); and, this often but not always proves to be in the vicinity of, or even inside, the household of the husband's father (there is a tendency toward patrilocality). Finally, most Kanuri marriages, the [586] vast majority of them certainly, end in divorce.

58 Because a marriage usually involves the creation of whole sets of kinship links where none existed before, the way in which such changes are brought about and made "official," or publically recognized, is an important aspect in the anthropological study of marriage. Furthermore, such activities are also very important moments in the lives of the individuals concerned, who must see to it that all that should be done is done correctly according to traditional custom. Thus we start looking at marriage by describing its inception.

581 In thinking about a marriage the first question that any Kanuri man asks himself is whether he can afford it or not. That is, can he and those people on whom he can count for financial aid take on the expense of a marriage ceremony and bridewealth payments; and, if he can, how high can he go?

581 595 A man who already has a wife or wives knows that he must give gifts, supposedly equal to those going to the bride, to wives already married to him. He knows that the pressures for expenditures for drummers, food, transportation of the bride to his dwelling, and many other aspects of the ceremony, will very likely involve more of an outlay than he can readily predict. Can the capital be raised for such an undertaking? Most men are helped by their friends, their kin, and their political and economic patrons if they have any. Kanuri recognize the outcome of marriage expenses in their oft-quoted saying, "A man who is not in debt over a wedding is a man who has no friends."

583 Bridewealth payments form the basic marriage expense, and they can vary in size and elaborateness depending upon the status of the two family groups who are joined through the marriage, the marital history of the girl, the previous relations of the groom to the girl's family, the bargaining power of each party to the marriage arrangement, and the time of year during which the payments are to be made. Although other factors can enter in and pull the bridewealth up or down in individual cases, these are the most effective determinants of bridewealth.

The payments themselves can be divided into three general categories, plus a "rebate." First there are one or more small gifts given to the girl and her rela-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

often people use old women for such purposes. He was anxious about the gift and so went to an expert on medicines who gave him a couple of special kola nuts whose magical love potion power would direct the woman to find him irresistible. His confidence thus buoyed up, he visited her himself and they had a short affair. He tasted her cooking, observed her behavior, and after two weeks sent a friend to the older brother to arrange for the marriage payments. Three weeks later, after the marriage was proposed to the *luwali*, (in this case her older brother), the couple were married. Modu was delighted and later assured me that for most of the entire six months they remained married he was quite happy. In the end they quarreled bitterly because his wife was out of the house visiting much too often for him not to be suspicious of her fidelity. Finally he simply told her to pack her things and leave his house.

The case illustrates the ease with which Kanuri men and women moved in and out of marriage—a perfectly normal pattern in Bornu. Bornu is a land where divorces are very common, and a marriage break-up is never the social and psychological catastrophy it can easily be in the west. To understand why we must look more closely at Kanuri married life.

Married Life

By comparison with western society, Kanuri husbands are at home a great deal. The home is the center of activities where men take their leisure, visit their friends, and receive visitors all day long. If at all possible they carry out their occupational activities in the household making it the central location for their daily work. Such constant contact of husband and wife in the household is rather rare in western society. Paradoxically however, husbands and wives are far less intimate and friendly than they are in the west. In their daily lives, women cook, nurse young children, bring water for the household if there is no well, help in the fields, grow garden crops and maize in the back of the compound, prepare cooked and uncooked foods, make pots, trade, and visit one another to help with the preparation of ceremonies as well as for companionship and hairdressing. Men clear the fields and plant crops, work at a large number of crafts including modern ones such as truck driving or using Singer sewing machines; they also engage in religious activities as specialists, and carry out specialized political, judicial and medical roles.

In upper class families, women are in *purdah* (restricted to the household) and live at the back of the compound furthest away from its entrance. They leave the compound only on rare occasions and even then they must seek the permission of their husbands well in advance. They are usually accompanied on such excursions by servants who may escort the upper class lady half way across the emirate to visit her own family for a ceremony at which her presence is required. On the other hand, peasant women must go to the well at least twice a day for water, and in some villages this means a walk of several miles. These women work on the farm plots of the various members of the household during the short growing season and sell cooked foods. Ordinary women use the occasions away from their husband's households to meet and talk freely with other women, and sometimes, of course, with other men.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

595 ly badgered her husband into marrying a young girl. He finally acceded to her wishes and chose a previously unmarried girl from a nearby village. The bride-wealth and marriage expenses sent the man into great debt, but he decided that it was worth it because of the increased prestige and because he believed his wife would now stop agitating him about it and have a young friend in the house that she said she had wanted for a long time. Only three weeks afterwards the senior wife began to to demand that the husband get rid of the new wife. "The young one was not helpful," she said, and she also accused the husband of favoring his new wife over her. Finally she threatened to leave if the new wife was not disposed of and the confused husband, worried over his debts, and angered because of her change in attitude let her go and divorced her rather than accede to her new demands. In another case a man announced to his wife that he was going to marry a new wife, and she flew into a towering rage which lasted for several days. She was only mildly contained by the many gifts and had several outbursts of temper during the wedding ceremony.

593 Although men are dominant by force of tradition, discrepancies are very
591 common in everyday life. I have observed women leaving their husbands' com-
562 pound against their wishes, and many are said to be unfaithful sexually. Indeed
837 this is a favorite topic of conversation and men who are intimate friends tell jokes
521 about who is having an affair with whose wife. Some women openly flaunt their husband's authority by threatening to leave him if he refuses to allow them their
593 own way. In many cases such inconsistency between the expectations of husband
586 and wife relations and the realities of everyday married life lead to divorce.

Only rare Kanuri have not been divorced once or twice during their lifetime, and many have divorced three and often four times; eight or nine divorces is not uncommon. When explaining divorces, husbands complain of their wives cooking badly, or not on time, or not enough; they also complain of visits to relatives and friends that they felt were unnecessary, of attendance at public dances or ceremonies, of their wives being dirty, or of adultery; but always they mention and stress some activity that involves the wife's disobedience. Wives when speaking of divorces complain of their husband's intolerance, of their activities outside the household, of their stinginess, or their lack of sexual attention or skill, or of their extra-marital affairs; sometimes they complain of co-wives, or the husband's lack of appreciation of their services, especially their cooking.

Most divorces occur in the first five years of marriage, and the husband almost always formally initiates divorce proceedings. This results from the fact that the bridewealth must be returned if the wife officially initiates the divorce. Generally speaking, women can informally initiate a divorce by behaving so badly that the husband has no recourse but to send her packing, thus forfeiting his bride-wealth and submitting to her wish. In one case I knew, the mother and older brother of the young girl instructed her to behave badly because they disapproved of her husband's wish to take her to the city. He took her anyway but by the end of a month found it impossible to live with her and had to send her back to her relatives in the rural area. In a few cases women initiate divorces rather more forcefully. A favorite technique in this regard is to grab the husband by the collar of his robe and scream at him, "I won't let go until you say, 'I divorce you.'" A crowd gathers and the man invariably then capitulates by saying, "I divorce you." In very

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

rare circumstances women themselves initiate the proceedings by announcing the divorce, although this is usually done with a circumlocution such as when she says, as one woman did, "There is nothing holding us together but these gifts that you have given me. Take them. I wish to go."

About eighty to ninety percent of all marriages end in divorce, probably because it is such a simple affair. The husband in most cases simply tells the wife to go, saying "I divorce you." He does not say it three times, as is usual in Islamic countries, because the wife may return, for the Kanuri practice of Muslim marriage is such that, after saying "I divorce you," three times there should be no reconciliation or remarriage. Once a pronouncement of divorce has been made the woman leaves her husband's household and the marriage enters a special hundred-day period in which the woman cannot remarry although the man may do so. This is defined as a waiting period to see whether or not the woman is pregnant so that the man can claim the child. The woman generally returns to her *luwali* at this time and there is always some negotiation between the man and the *luwali* to see whether or not the marriage can be patched up. About one-third of all divorce pronouncements do end in reconciliation even though the husband most often divorces her again later on. It is interesting to note that unlike western society, practically no Kanuri divorce cases (perhaps one percent) go to the courts; thus it is impossible to get the records of divorce except through field study of actual cases.

When a divorce occurs children remain with their father unless they are still nursing. After nursing they are generally sent back to the father's household, although the period is sometimes stretched out for young girls who are trained by their mothers. Children of broken unions are cared for by a father's co-wife or by some other close relative of the father. Contacts with a divorced parent are always maintained and the child visits his or her mother regularly. This is especially true for boys who expect to take care of their mother when she is an elderly unmarried woman. Conflicts sometimes arise because a man's daughter does not return and the mother's relatives or one of her subsequent husbands might try to arrange a marriage without consulting her own father. If such consultations take place, however, no one feels put out and the man who arranged the marriage takes a portion of the bridewealth in payment.

Each spouse in a marriage maintains very close contacts with his or her own relatives. Presents are exchanged and visits back and forth between members of kin groups are very common. Children are named after relatives, especially grandparents, and in many cases go to live with them after weaning, or before the birth of a new baby in the family. Only in cases of long term marriage does a wife finally come to feel a part of and fully accepted by her husband's family. However when this does happen the wife can become a very powerful voice in the family, and her long and intimate association with her husband often means that she has become a permanent authority in the household. In one such case a senior wife had never been married to anyone else and had been married to her husband, a powerful man in the village, for thirty years. The man remarked that he made very few decisions without consulting this woman, and people recognized that she had a powerful position in village affairs. Such cases, however, are not common. Kanuri marriage involves a separation of the sexes not only by custom and tradition but as a result of the conflicts in marriage relations which produce tensions between husbands and

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

and the boys go there to learn their prayers and the beginning of Islamic theology. In some cases, especially with girls, the instruction is taken in the household itself. During adolescence this training may become more serious, and boys who were not sent to live with their religious teachers before may go off to learn Islamic practices in greater detail. The relationship of a boy to his *mallam* or religious teacher is expressed in the saying, "Your mallam exceeds your father." In other words, a boy's religious instructor exceeds his father in fatherly qualities and he must be respected and obeyed as a superior whose authority is unquestioned.

Whether a child goes to live with his religious teacher or not, there are other important factors that maintain for him a high turn-over among household members that is in striking contrast to the norms of western society. No matter where he lives in Bornu there is a high divorce rate and the possibility that his mother and father will not live together all their lives is very great indeed. Children stay under the control of their father in his household, although some contact with the mother is maintained and remains a strong emotional bond for many, even though there is a constant possibility that it cannot remain a household relationship. High divorce also means that the mother's co-wives are continually changing and that one's own half-siblings may be without their own mother in the compound so that compound relationships themselves are continually shifting and changing throughout a person's childhood.

The Kanuri also practice fostering. In some cases children are given to grandparents, or friends, or other relatives to be raised. Sometimes the reasons are political, and the parents try to place the child in a very important person's household so that the child may grow up knowing and associating with people who can help him later on in life. Sometimes it is felt to be a kindness towards a friend or to the child's grandparents. Whatever the reason, the child lives during his early years in a compound other than that of his own parents. It is possible to find Kanuri who have lived in as many as four or five compounds by the time they reach adolescence, and two or three is quite common. On the other hand, there are also many people—especially in rural areas where their work is needed—who were raised in only one household. One informant reported how he was given to a father's younger brother at weaning, given to a religious teacher at six, returned to his father at the age of eight, then put into the household of the district head when he was thirteen. Although there is much variation in this practice, in conjunction with the high divorce rate as well as the always present possibility of sudden death by disease, it means again that the actual people in the younger person's relational network are many, many, times more fluid and changing than is the case in western society.

Summing up this very important point, we may say that it is a rare Kanuri who has passed through childhood with a stable set of interpersonal relations to siblings or adult members of his household. This means that in child training the relationships to specific persons are not stressed as much as the norms of behavior we spoke of in Chapter 3. The one important exception to this is the relationship to one's mother which is particularly strong between a mother and her son. This fits nicely into the life cycle of women who, as we shall see, usually return to their son later in their old age to take up the role of old, unmarried women. In stressing the norms of behavior rather than particular relationships, it is respect and obedience

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

must ask his permission to do anything. To be seen speaking to another man is grounds for divorce. On the other hand a divorced woman is free. She comes and goes as she pleases and speaks to whoever she pleases quite freely. Some women quite frankly remark that they prefer this status to that of marriage while others just as strongly remark that they would like to get a husband.

In summary, maturity is a time of achievement for men in which they become full-fledged members of their community. They marry, try to raise families, and become heads of successful and productive households. Women try to marry successfully and hopefully to have children. However, as I have pointed out elsewhere, tensions caused by the demands of subordination in their married role produce strains and rebelliousness that very often leads to the break-up of marriage.[3] In the final analysis the culture is androcentric; there are many means by which men can become successful—through their occupation, their associations with neighbors, relatives, friends, and important men, and through membership and finally headship of a household. In spite of a turnover in wives associated with the high amount of divorce, the household itself is a stable unit, although its personnel is not. On the other hand, it is the rare Kanuri woman who can achieve a successful adulthood. Many women are barren or have had children who have not survived. Very few women remain married to the same men all their lives and most have had one or more extended periods of being divorced and looking for a husband. By centering on men and emphasizing their needs and wishes, Kanuri culture has produced a strain on women that is a fertile field for changes when modernization produces the possibility of new goals for women and new means for achieving them.

Old Age

Old age is signalled in both sexes by the whitening of body hair even though other body characteristics may remain strong and healthy. For both old men and women this last period in life means that many of the obligations and responsibilities of adult life are slowly relinquished, although men generally feel that they belong to the adult roles much longer than women. As heads of households and office holders in governmental positions, men wield powers in a number of spheres and give these up slowly and reluctantly as old age drains away their energy and efficiency. Ideally in Kanuri culture a man should reach the golden years of his life in his old age. If all goes well he receives much respect; his work is carried on by descendants, and his position as a household head may have grown to the point where he is the senior authority among a group of households organized along the lines of a patrilocal extended family with clients, sons, brothers, and their wives and families looking to him for leadership. When he is very old and becoming progressively infirm, he lets many of these duties pass to mature members of the group. Even then they always consult him on decisions and pay heed to his wishes.

The reality in Kanuri society is often far from the ideal although the ideal is a very widely agreed upon goal. To obtain this most desirable position in old age a

[3] See Ronald Cohen, "Marriage instability among the Kanuri of Northern Nigeria," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 63, 1231–1249.

611 centralized the political system the greater the tendency seems
171 to be for the corporate strength of descent groups to be re-
182 duced or for such corporate groups to be non-existent."[1] This is particularly apt in describing the Kanuri. Fortes states that the Nupe, the Zulu and the Hausa exemplify this. Culturally, the Kanuri share a good deal with both the Nupe and the Hausa, who are also Sudanic state-societies influenced by Islam, and this similarity extends to their social organization as well. In fact, the Kanuri represent the most extreme development of these features, for whereas among both the Nupe and the Hausa patrilineal lineages and sibs are reported the Kanuri are clearly bilateral in descent, and do not have corporate kin groups at all.

594 The most important social unit determined by kinship is
595 the nuclear or the polygamous family. Consequently, this section will be concerned with a discussion of marriage, residence, the family and the household. Other aspects of social organization which are not based on kinship, such as the class structure, will be discussed separately.

1. Marriage.

586 It may seem curious to begin a section on marriage with a
587 statement about divorce; nevertheless it is important to note at the start that the Kanuri divorce frequently, commonly, and

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1. Meyer Fortes. "The Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups," American Anthropologist, 55, No. 1 (1953), p. 26.

586 587 with ease. Since most men marry a number of times in the course of a normal life, they are likely to marry women who have been married previously and whose earlier marriage (or marriages) has ended in divorce. An important distinction is made between a marriage with a girl who has never been married before, and marriages with women who have been married previously.

585 302 a) Marriage with a virgin. The adult Kanuri woman wears her hair in a striking coiffure which resembles a Trojan helmet. Adolescent girls who have not yet married wear their hair in totally different fashion. Their hair-do is divided into three parts, and they are referred to as kalə yaskə, a term for their particular developmental stage which derives from the hair-do that characterizes the stage. Since very high priority is placed on virginity for a girl before marriage, a first marriage with a kalə yaskə is equivalent to marriage with a virgin.

584 Marriages are frequently arranged, but consent of both boy and girl plays a part, even in marriages in which the boy is marrying for the first time and the girl is a kalə yaskə. A boy may come to his father to say that he likes a particular girl. It frequently happens then that the boy's father will go to the house of the father of the girl, bringing presents with him, to arrange the marriage. The father of the boy may also select a particular girl as wife for his son, ask the boy if he likes the girl, then make the arrangements with the father of the girl. A talaka may marry the daughter of a very good family, if he can raise the money needed for her bride-price. The sole

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583 by Maliki law. Premarital bride-service is not permitted in lieu of the luwaliram. A man would be ashamed to go to his future father-in-law to say that he had no money to pay the luwaliram.

584 The girl is represented by her luwali in arranging a marriage. The luwali may be a relative or friend of the girl, but not her father (except in the case of a sadaka marriage noted above). The luwali states the amount of the luwaliram. The bridegroom may also be represented by someone, or he may make his own arrangements. The bridegroom, or his representative, may accept the stated price, or he may bargain for a lower price. The luwaliram is given to the luwali, who in turn passes it to [431] the girl's father. The girl's father gives a token fee to the luwali, gives presents to the groom which include both money and clothing, and gives his daughter household utensils and jewelry.

583 At the time of marriage, an additional payment, <u>sədagu</u> [436] (Arabic, sadak), is made. Sədagu is paid in the form of Maria Theresa dollars, two to five being the average amount of sədagu payment, though now eight shillings may be substituted for each Maria Theresa dollar. The size of the sədagu is arranged for before the marriage, and initial payment of part of the sədagu [586] may be made before the marriage. Should a couple divorce before the entire sədagu has been paid, the difference must be paid at the time of divorce.

Finally, in addition to both luwaliram and sədagu, there is still a third type of payment, called <u>məri</u>, which must be

585 626 virgin, he beats her that night, and proclaims it openly. Both the girl and her mother feel shame; the husband, in turn, feels that he has been defrauded and has gotten a bad bargain. The fugurum money, however, is not repaid him. Though the Kanuri know that the hymen may be removed surgically, and that the Arabs do do this in order to make the wedding night less painful to the bride, they never do it themselves; the hymen is always forcefully broken.

585 On the following day, friends of the girl come to cook for her and for her husband, and they do this for seven days, while the bride does nothing except bathe and decorate herself while [834] visitors come to greet her. Her husband is permitted to resume having intercourse with her after four days. If he has another wife, he does not sleep with her for those seven days, nor does she cook for him during that period.

b) Marriage with a divorced woman. The above description of marriage practices represents the marriage of a man with a kalə yaskə, described as a virgin, and usually, though not always a virgin. More properly, such a marriage should be called a girl's first marriage, in contrast to subsequent marriages.

• 586 587 Should she be divorced, the woman enters a totally different category in the social structure. She becomes a <u>zogor</u>, and marriage with a zogor is different in many respects from marriage with a kalə yaskə. The status of a man does not change significantly after a divorce, consequently there is no category for a ∞ man corresponding to that of the zogor. His first marriage fre-

His first marriage fre-
582 quently is with a kalə yaskə, but this is not always the case.
[587] Many young men of poor families marry a zogor when they marry
[556] for the first time. Since polygamy is permitted, and under Islamic law a man may have as many as four wives, men of important and wealthy families take more than one wife, and prefer to marry a kalə yaskə each time.

885 It was mentioned that the kalə yaskə takes her name from
302 the hair-do worn by girls before maturity. After marriage, with the permission of her young husband, she will have her hair redone according to the style which characterizes an adult woman. Thereafter she is not a kalə yaskə; she takes her place with
586 adults. Should she be divorced by her husband, she would re-
885 turn to the protection of her luwali. She is then eligible for marriage once again, though now she approaches the situation as a grown woman, and of course, one who is not inexperienced in sex.
[587] Attitudes attending the marriage of a kalə yaskə, and much of the ceremony involved, are no longer appropriate when a zogor marries.

586 A woman who becomes a zogor suddenly finds that she has a great deal of freedom in her behavior. Her luwali, or some older friend or relative, provides her with a room in his household,
[535] and men come to court her. She participates in the frequent outdoor dancing in which only zogors take a part since no self-
584 respecting husband would permit his wife to dance publicly. An
587 unmarried man enters into a relationship with a zogor which
[431] ideally should end in their marriage. If he is not already married, he comes to visit the zogor regularly, bringing her presents of clothing and jewelry. It is accepted that a man court-

It is accepted that a man court-
586 836 584 587 548 831 ing a zogor has sex relations with her. The zogor differs from a prostitute, who takes money from each man who has sex relations with her. Prostitutes are known, and the practice of prostitution is abhorred; zogors exist everywhere as a natural part of Kanuri social organization. The zogor does not receive payment for her services, nor does she ever receive several men in one night, a characteristic of prostitution which the Kanuri particularly single out as repellent to them. A zogor regularly is visited by the same man for a period of weeks. Ideally, this ends in marriage; however, if they find themselves incompatible the relationship is terminated and someone else comes to court the zogor, while the man enters into a 626 new relationship with another zogor. A woman who prolongs her status as a zogor for several years, because she enjoys the freedom which is permitted a zogor, or because she enjoys the attentions of many men without the responsibilities of marriage, begins to be thought of as a loose woman by the community. Few men would marry such a woman because such a marriage would not be expected to last.

595 Should a man have one wife and wish to marry a second, a zogor, he would begin to pay attention to the zogor. Noticing this, his first wife might become jealous, and might ask him, "What are you doing talking to that zogor?" Should he answer that he wishes to marry her, the issue is settled, as it is perfectly reasonable for a man to contemplate taking a second wife. However, attitudes towards a second wife vary among Kanuri wom-

587 The levirate among the Kanuri is called fatorongabe. A man must marry the widow of his elder brother (yaga); he is not permitted to marry the widow of his younger brother (kərami). At the death of one's wife, one may marry her younger sister, but one is forbidden to marry her elder sister. This, too, is called fatorongabe.

2. Divorce.

586 779 The Koran has a great deal to say about divorce, particularly in Sura II ("The Cow"), and Sura LXV ("Divorce"). It specifically mentions a waiting period of four months (three full menstrual courses for the woman) to determine if the woman is pregnant before the divorce is final and the woman becomes a zogor. A man may divorce his wife twice and take her back again, but after the third time, she must marry another man before she can remarry her first husband. After the waiting period, the husband cannot maliciously retain his former wife or prevent her from marrying another man. If the husband divorces his wife before the marriage is consummated, but after the bride-price has been settled, half of the bride-price should be paid, unless the husband is released from payment, but it is more proper that the [853] husband should forego it. After a divorce, mothers with nursing children should be permitted to let the children nurse for two whole years, while they are supported by the father of the child.

Kanuri practice concerning divorce operates within the limits dictated by the Koran. The husband divorces his wife by say-

586 779 ing, "I divorce you," or, "The marriage is over." When a husband divorces his wife she leaves his house and goes to the house of her luwali. A wife cannot divorce her husband, but, as the Alkali of Geidam phrased it, "The power of a woman is in the law; the law helps her." As an example, he noted that if a woman hits her husband, that is nothing, but if a man hits his wife, the marriage can be dissolved by an Alkali. She can ask the court to grant her a divorce if her husband is impotent, and therefore not a real husband. If he disputes the accusation the court may actually attempt to ascertain whether it is true or not, by witnessing whether the husband is capable of having intercourse with his wife.

A man may divorce his wife twice, and take her back within the three months and ten day waiting period, or at any time after that. After the third time, he is forbidden from taking [W94] her back until she has married and divorced another man. If they continue to live together after the third divorce, they are living in a state of sin called dəl for which the punishment is hell. A man may divorce his wife only once and say dəla to her, and the marriage is dissolved, just as if he had divorced her for the third time.

When a man divorces his wife, friends and neighbors frequently come to attempt to arbitrate their dispute (sholo). 586 681 The husband may finalize the separation by saying, "Yanyi" (She is like my mother). Having said this, the marriage is ended, and the husband may not take back his wife unless he pays a fine

586 779 681 of sixty bowls of millet. If he pays the fine they may resume living together as a married couple; if he does not pay, living together is haram (forbidden), equivalent to living with one's mother as one's wife. If, in the course of a quarrel, the husband calls his wife "Yanyi", he must pay the fine or the marriage is dissolved.

586 779 [692] It would seem that the husband's abilities to dissolve a marriage are much greater than those of his spouse. The wife, however, has many ways open to her for bringing about a divorce, and, as was noted above, the law protects her rights. If the wife merely dislikes her husband and wants a divorce from him, he may refuse unless she pays him a sum of money. Since the husband loses the luwaliram when he divorces his wife, he will demand that she return the luwaliram to him (and some times more in addition), if it is she who wishes to bring about an end to the marriage. Amicable divorces of this type, where it is the wife who seeks to initiate the divorce, are brought about by an agreement concerning the luwaliram payment. Should the husband refuse to divorce his wife, she may take to disobeying him, and cease to prepare his meals. In that case he may take her to court, and unless she has a reasonable claim against her husband (for example, that he beats her), the court will order her to swear on the Koran that she will behave properly in the future. Oaths taken on the Koran are thought of in very serious terms, and are not lightly broken. It is thought that a wife who has sworn on the Koran and who breaks her oath will die for swearing falsely.

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586 779 for swearing falsely. The wife, however, is in a powerful position since she can continue to make life unpleasant for her husband in a variety of ways. She can take to going out a lot, on a variety of pretexts. One day she may visit a friend; another day it may be her "sick cousin." The husband will become increasingly more jealous and enraged at being unable to control his wife's behavior, and may eventually capitulate and grant her a divorce involving an agreement concerning return of the luwaliram.

Children under whatever circumstances of divorce belong to the father, though the father must leave them with their mother until they are weaned. They then come to live with him.

[431] If a husband has divorced his wife and therefore has not had the luwaliram returned to him, he may take back all the gifts that he gave to his wife during the course of their marriage: jewelry, clothing, household goods, etc. If the wife has paid back the luwaliram in order to obtain a divorce, the husband has no claim to the presents which he gave her. If a kalə yaskə wishes to divorce her husband, she must pay him a great deal more than a zogor would pay, since the luwaliram for her was so much greater.

586 578 152 The Kanuri talk about <u>boye</u>, a jealous curiosity which a husband or a wife may feel towards one's divorced spouse. This involves longing to return to a former spouse, looking to see what the divorced spouse is presently doing, and curiosity as to whether she or he has new lovers. Boye may reach the point

586 where a former spouse might attack his wife's new lover with a
578
152 knife.

3. Residence.

591 It is usually stated that after marriage, a boy's father
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369 builds his house for him if he is able to, and he builds his
183 son's house close to his own. This is subject to a number of qualifications, the foremost being the all-pervading difference between rural and urban Kanuri culture. In the rural villages the ideal is frequently realized, and the son marries and lives [606] not far from the house of his mother and father. His wives then prepare meals for their mother- and father-in-law, as well as for their husband. The old mother continues to cook for her husband, but her daughter-in-law sends her additional food as well. However, if there is no plot of land on which to build a house adjacent to his father's house, the son's house may be built any place else. If the boy's father is dead, his mother may build the house for him, or he may work and earn money with which he may build his own house. If the boy's father is a poor man and has no money for building his son's house, his son may leave the village, marry elsewhere, and build his house in another village or another town. If he marries a girl whose father is a rich man, the father-in-law may build a house for his daughter and her husband, though it is much more common for the father of the boy to build the house. If a man with a rich farm has several daughters and no sons, his sons-in-law may come to live near his house and help him farm.

596 592 in the household of the boy's father, or when an elderly parent is taken into his son or daughter's household, three generations are found living together. Most typically, no more than two generations are found living in the same household. These may be either nuclear families, or polygamous families.

595 Polygamy is preferred, though it is of course difficult to support two or more wives. Sororal polygamy is forbidden--a man may not marry two sisters; in fact, he is forbidden from visiting with two sisters who are both zogors (and therefore he would presumably be sleeping with them), since they are both potentially spouses.

A man's house is surrounded by the walls of his compound, and within these walls live all the members of his household. Each wife must have her own house with its small surrounding area. This is her zəgəsə (meaning a narrow area). It is preferable that the house areas of a man's co-wives be distinctly separated, so that one wife cannot hear her husband as he speaks to his other wife when they are alone. The zəgəsə are frequently walled off within the compound. Since the husband usually builds his house, or has it built for him by his father, he is the owner, and theoretically he owns everything which belongs to his wife as well, her clothing and her personal effects, and the cooking utensils, storage pots, and household possessions. He can demand these things from her should she leave his house, though this rarely happens and she normally leaves, taking these possessions with her.

422 593 [586]

592 In addition to the formal relationships between master and slave, and between adopted son and chibuna, described above, there are informal ways through which an individual may become attached to a household. Every adult must be attached to some 592 household. Since the minimal household is represented by a man 586 and his wife, a divorced couple marks the end of their household. Each of them, man and woman, must now attach himself to another household. The primary reason for this is economic--and it makes itself felt immediately in the problem of food. [462] A man without a wife has no one to cook for him. Since no Kanuri man would ever cook for himself (cooking and preparation of food are tasks confined to women), he must attach himself to the household of a friend, neighbor, or close relative, [156] and regularly take his meals there. However, it is somewhat shameful to continue on in this position, and a man who had recently divorced his wife tends to take another wife before long, thereby re-establishing his own household. The woman, after a divorce, goes back to her luwali, and becomes a zogor who lives in his household until she remarries. She, too, becomes a temporary member of her luwali's household and takes her meals with the women of that household. The luwali has the responsibility of offering a roof to his ward after her divorce, and it is not uncommon to find a zogor living for a time as a part of a large household. Men will regularly come to court her, and in time she will remarry and leave her luwali's household.

000 There is still another way to become part of a large house-

592 father and son, though of course kinship has nothing to do with
609 setting up that relationship in the first place. In this sense,
571 the household functions like a kin group but is not itself a product of kinship.

592 The Kanuri do not hire servants, nor do they typically hire
461 other Kanuri to work for them. A man's labor is not for hire,
571 to be paid for in cash. Though the Kanuri have long used money in commercial dealings, its use has never been extended to labor. One man works for another because that is part of his obligation which grows out of their relationship. A tata njima works for the master of the household, not for any immediate payment such as wages, but because the relationship between a tata njima and his master entails labor on the part of the tata njima. Not only is he expected to perform any task asked of him by the household head, he is also expected always to act in the interests of the household head, and constantly to protect those interests. Tata njima who are part of the household of a trader help him in the distribution and sale of his goods and travel to other markets selling goods in his behalf; they also farm for him during the rainy season, and do all sorts of tasks about the compound.

592 In turn, the head of the household is obliged to provide
571 his tata njima with shelter and with clothing, and to feed
[583] them. He provides the luwaliram for male members of the house-
[586] hold, and stands in as luwali for females. After a divorce, both man and woman may return to his household. He is also ex-

593 four upper categories all seclude their wives, save for two
562 individuals whose wives are permitted to leave the compound
565 but who rarely go out (partly kule). In the four lower cate-
564 gories only a few individuals attempt to keep their wives se-
463 cluded. The great majority permit their wives to leave the compound and go about the town; indeed, ordinary people would be unable to maintain themselves without the economic assistance of their wives.

2. Divorce.

• 586 From the data presented in Table X it is possible to obtain an estimate of the divorce rate in Geidam. Table Xa gives the total number of wives, including their present wives, to whom the members of the sample have been married. They range from four individuals who have had but one wife, to one man who has had twenty. Six of the forty-four individuals have had from thirteen to twenty wives. The median for the group is 5.5 wives (mean is 6.4). The groups do not seem to differ radically from one another.

Table Xb comprises the total number of wives (Xa) minus the number of wives to which each individual is presently married (Table VII), and thus indicates the number of divorces for each individual. They range from six individuals who have never been divorced to one man who has been divorced nineteen times. The median number of divorces for the group is 3.75
586 (mean is 4.98). The Koranic Malams have clearly had fewer di-
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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 2051

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Table X

X a

Total Number of Wives per Person

	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8	-9	-10	-11	-12	-13	-14	-15	-16	-17	-18	-19	-20
Aristocracy		1		1			1		2												
Koranic Malams			1		2																
Canteen Traders					1	1	2		1	1											
NA Malams			3	1				1								1					
Kabuna					2	1		1		1	1										
Craftsmen		1				2		1	1									1			
Talaka		2			1			1	1					1			1				1
Low-status	1			1					1					1							
Totals:	1	4	4	3	6	4	3	4	6	2	1	-	-	2	-	1	1	1	-	-	1

median = 5.5
mean = 6.4

[GEIDAM]

• 586
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X b

Number of Divorces per Person

	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8	-9	-10	-11	-12	-13	-14	-15	-16	-17	-18	-19	-20
Aristocracy	1		1		1		1	1													
Koranic Malams		1	2																		
Canteen Traders		1	2		1		2														
NA Malams	2	1	1			1								1							
Kabuna			2	1			1		1	1											
Craftsmen	1				2	1		1								1					
Talaka	1	1		1			1	1					1			1				1	
Low-status	1		1					1					1								
Totals:	6	4	9	2	4	2	5	4	1	1	-	-	2	1	-	2	-	-	-	1	-

median = 3.75
mean = 4.88

[GEIDAN]

[GEIDAM]

586 565 554 463 vorces than have other groups. In turn, the talaka have had more numerous divorces. There is a distinct tendency for the lower categories in the table, who marry overwhelmingly with zogors, as noted above, to marry and divorce more frequently than the upper categories (canteen traders and NA Malams), and in fact the Koranic Malams who marry only kalo yaskas have the lowest divorce rate.

3. Family and Household.

163 The number of living children of each of the individuals in the sample is presented in Table XI. In all, 44 adult Ka-

Table XIa

Number of Living Children

163 565 559 463

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Aristocracy	1	2	2						
Koranic Malams			1			1			1
Canteen Traders	1	1		2	2				
NA Malams	1	3	1	1					
Kabuna	4	1		1					
Craftsmen	4	1	1						
Talaka	7				1				
Low-status	1	2							
Totals:	19	10	5	4	3	1	-	-	1

[BEIDAM]

Table XIb

Cases of Children Given Away

Aristocracy	2:	to FaYoBr after weaning to FaEISi after weaning
Koranic Malams	1:	to MoMo after weaning
Canteen Traders	1:	to cousin after weaning
NA Malams	1:	to FaElBr (chibuna) after weaning
Kabuna	-	
Craftsmen	1:	to neighbor (chibuna) after weaning
Talaka	1:	to FaMo at age h
Low-status	1:	to chibuna at age 11
	8	

median number of children= .75

mean number of children=1.33

nuri men in this sample have 57 living children. One hundred and eight children had been born to the group, but 51 of these have died. Because of the exceptionally high infant mortality rate, children are greatly desired and prized. In addition to malaria, which is the greatest killer of infants, an extremely high rate of venereal disease is present in Bornu, and a high percentage of those infected are sterile and unable to bear children. One factor in spreading venereal disease is the high divorce rate. Frequent divorce and remarriage spreads the disease throughout the population, and results in many sterile individuals who desperately want children. In their desire for children, they divorce and remarry, thus spreading the disease still further. In particular, if they marry a zogor they are

In particular, if they marry a zogor they are less likely to have children than if they marry a kalə yaskə. This probably accounts for the high birth rate among the Koranic Malams (one has eight children; one has five); they have all married kalə yaskəs, so that neither they or their wives are likely to be infected. On the other hand, in the lower categories (kabuna, craftsmen, talaka) a majority of the individuals have had no children at all. Seven of the eight talaka have no living children. This is the group with the highest divorce rate, and when they remarry they invariably marry zogors (see Table VIII) so that the chances are high that either husband or wife will be infected and sterile.

Table XIb reveals that eight of the 57 children who survived were given away, and grew up in the household of another family. At first, this seems difficult to reconcile with the great love for children and desire to have children. However, those who have borne a child have indicated their ability to bear others. Children are frequently given to relatives who have no children of their own, and who are probably unable to bear children but want a child badly. It may be seen that children are given away to siblings of the parent, to the child's grandparent, or to the chibuna after whom the child has been named. Six of the eight were given immediately after the child was weaned; two were given away at later ages. Giving of children at later ages is related to frequent divorce. Since the child belongs to the father, he may send the child to his mother or father should he, the father, not have an adequate home at the time.

[GEIDAM]

592 households is there any indication of patrilocal residence and of a patrilocal extended family. The only approximation is found in the cases of elderly mothers living with their married sons, and in the case of married younger brothers with wife and child. More distant relatives are also found; although two cases of ElBrSo are present, in no case is there an elder brother living in the household of his younger brother, where the younger brother is the acknowledged household head. The same is true of a wife's relatives living in the household of her husband. There are six cases of this; four are younger siblings of the wife, one is her ElBrDa, and one a grandson. 592 An older sibling of the wife is nowhere present. The same pat- 584 tern is evident in the zogors who are temporarily a part of a household, after a divorce. A zogor returns to the household of her luwali. Seven zogors are present in the above households. Three are not related to the household head who served as luwali; four are relatives--a YoSi, an ElBrDa, a YoSi of the wife and a cousin.

592 Corresponding to the eight children who were given away 597 to relatives or to chibuna by the members of the sample are 565 the children given to members of the sample and growing up in 463 their houses. There are six chibuna, young children named [553] after the household head and growing up in his house, who are a part of the present group of households. Four of these are found in the canteen traders, one in the aristocracy, and one 592 (an ElBrSo) among the talaka. It is evident, therefore, that 597

603 the difference in generation of the parties, there is a higher secondary content of fondness on the grandparent's part, while the slight lessening of this dimension is associated with a corresponding rise of the respect relation on the part of the grandchild. It does not show up in the questionnaire data summarized in Table I, because the joking relations (suli) with grandparents already includes friendship behaviour within its meaning content for this particular category of relative. Therefore when subjects were asked how they behaved towards grandparents, their suli responses included the kind of affective behaviour covered by this relationship.

593 The same thing is true for the relationship to own mother, although for different reasons. No friendship responses were given to own mother, because the cultural ideal of shame-respect is so strong here. Thus there was a blanket response pattern from all subjects in accordance with the traditional value of shame-respect.

[612] Nonetheless, there is the possibility and indeed expectation of an affective fondness and friendship relation between ego (male or female speaking) and own mother, which is extended in theory to

[586] include the mother's kindred. When asked what was the worst thing that he could remember ever happening to him when he was young, an informant replied without hesitation that it had occurred when he had to stay in his father's house on the occasion of his mother's divorce of his father. Another informant related how he had gone to the Jos Plateau to learn something about geological survey work, as part of his training for a job with the Bornu N.A. However, after three months he claims he had strong yearnings to see his mother and subsequently walked off the job and returned to his

593 ship developing in the husband-wife relationship depending upon
[565] the stability of the union. Such friendships are aided and abetted
[586] by cousin marriage as well as by upper class position where the divorce rate does not seem to be as high.

572 Finally, an examination of the nature of friendship in
156 general excluding the grandparent-grandchild, and mother-child relations reveals some unique features which arise from its setting in the total social organization. The question can be raised as to why it is that friendship is not formalized or structured to the same extent as the other behaviours associated with the kinship system. Certainly, an immediate answer lies in the universal nature of this kind of interpersonal relationship, i.e., its affectivity and expressive content, and the concomitant emotional satisfactions which people obtain from such associations. These tend to create a large area for personality characteristics to determine exactly who among the available persons, for example age-mates in the kindred, ego will move toward in expanding and contracting his friendships. As in our society, social factors such as socio-economic status, occupation, residence patterns, ethnic background, and norms of upward mobility all enter into such choices as well. But there is more to Kanuri friendship relations than a mere addition or interaction of these idiosyncratic features of personality attraction and repulsion on the one hand and sociological variables on the other.

572 Informants were forever telling the anthropologist that someone he mentioned was a friend of theirs, although no affective or emotional or for that matter any very real social relationship existed between them. They meant, of course, that they liked

585 virgin wedding in which 15 women had come thirty miles on foot with their little relative and friend who was to be married, each of them was given five shillings by the bridegroom, the girl's mother was given twenty shillings and the two drummers, who had accompanied the party, were given fifteen shillings each. The groom had also paid the expences of the journey which included the rental of two camels for five pounds. In other words the journey had cost him somewhere around ten or eleven [583] pounds. His bridewealth payments had been eight M.T. Dollars and seventeen pounds sterling or about twenty pounds, which means that the bridal journey alone had cost him as much as half of his bridewealth payments.

Before the consummation in the privacy of his hut, the groom must bargain with the young bride over the <u>feroram</u> (consummation money, literally: the virgin's fee). This is usually achieved quite rapidly since there is a fairly standard price range of one to two pounds for this payment and agreement is commonly reached after a short conversation.

583 One final point must be made about Kanuri bridewealth; this is the idea of <u>use</u>. Kanuri moral tradition defines the bridewealth payment as a transfer of property given for the use of the woman by her husband. This is not a static but a processual arrangement which changes 583 its nature through time. Thus, if a woman leaves a man within the first • 586 year after marriage, before he has had a chance to utilise her services in agricultural production, then he has "not had his money's worth" and requires some of it back. This applies just as well to women who are in seclusion; indicating that it is the total function of the woman whose use the male feels he has acquired. If a divorce results very rapidly after the marriage through any fault of the woman, the male usually feels aggrieved and demands that part of the bridewealth be returned. His

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586 explanation of the matter is that his payments merited him more use of the woman than he has received. However, after a year or so (varying with the amount of the bridewealth, the reasons for divorce, the age and number of divorces the woman has previously had) and increasing with time (i.e. use), the husband's claim upon the returnability of his bridewealth diminishes. After a year and a half or so he can reclaim very little, except in proven cases of adultery, where he collects a money compensation awarded by the court. On the other hand, if during the first year of marriage, it can be proven by the girl and her family that the man has given offence or broken the rules, the marriage can be dissolved and the bridewealth forfeited.

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603 In practice, the system can be manipulated to the detriment of unsuspecting persons. One pathetic individual, who had been enticed into marriage with a virgin, found that the girl's grandmother with whom she had been living was against the marriage. Every time he left town for a day or two the girl's dowry was removed from the girl's hut and taken back to her luwali's compound across town where her grandmother lived. The husband had to threaten court action to get it back. The excuse used was that the girl's family was afraid of thieves. Gossip in the town judged that it was the grandmother who was hoping for a dissolution of the marriage. Townspeople claimed that she was trying to anger the husband by taking the dowry and the girl when he went away and only returning the girl when he came back. The matter soon came to a head when the husband decided to move to the city and take his wife with
[691] him. The girl's family disagreed and the matter went to court. The luwali and the grandmother accused the husband of mistreating the girl and claimed that the marriage should be dissolved with forfeiture of the bridewealth. The husband defended himself by saying that he had

583 only been married two months and had received no use of his capital out-
593 lay, therefore he would only give the girl back if his total marriage
602 expenses were returned. He calculated the amount to be twice the bride-
598 wealth. The judge ruled that since he had only slapped the girl a few
695 times there were no grounds to the charge of mistreatment and the husband should take the young girl to the city with him and try to straighten out his marriage difficulties.

The girl's family then told her to go to the city but not play the role of dutiful wife. Her luwali bragged publicly that she would be returned quite willingly by the husband inside of a week (it was actually three weeks before the girl did return). That is to say, it was predicted by the luwali that the husband would break up the marriage and send the girl out of his house, thereby forfeiting the bride-wealth. Once in the city the girl cooked badly, quarrelled with her co-wife, emptied the poor man's prayer pot when she needed water, and in a hundred little ways made his life miserable. However, she committed no one great offence which the husband felt he could legally get hold of as a respectable person.(1)

In the end, he lost his temper and told her to get out and go back to her family. Before doing so, he recounts how he first gave her a sound beating in order to get at least that much satisfaction from such a material loss in his investment; for in sending her home he was breaking up the marriage and thereby forfeited the bridewealth.

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593 It will be noticed in the above example that the independent

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184 (1) The range of complaints for which people will seek adjudication varies with socio-economic and rural/urban status. It is an upper class norm to keep most marital problems private unless it is absolutely necessary to go to court, while in the hamlets a woman was observed who, with her agnatic kin as supporters, brought her husband to court for having had sexual intercourse too frequently and wanted the judge to limit his advances by a ruling of the court.

A man who started using his wife's dowry without her knowledge and consent would have a fine argument on his hands immediately and most probably a divorce proceeding. One mother turned her young adolescent son over to a judge for a whipping because he took one of the enamel plates from her dowry to sell for cash. A woman's concept of her own personal worth is tied closely to her dowry. During her youth, it is the material expression of her relationship to her own family background. Later, as her independence grows and she adds to the dowry, she looks on it more as her personal property, her savings, which give her a measure of value in her immediate society. She can say of herself that she has 250 enamel dishes, while her younger co-wife has only 125.

The Kanuri recognize different varieties of marriage and have separate terms for each of them. Whether these are in fact different forms is a question of interpretation which will be discussed later.

The first and most important distinction about a marriage concerns the virgin status of the woman. This consequently divides all marriages into two broad categories depending upon whether or not the female has ever been married before. If she has, the marriage is described as kamu gwojin (he takes a woman). Conversely, if the female is a virgin, the union is termed a fero gwojin (he takes a girl or virgin). All informants agreed that union with a virgin is the most highly valued form of marriage in their society. They explained this by pointing to the chaste state of the girl. She is not used, they say, and this is good. However it should be noted that informants were also agreed that virgin girls were not sexually exciting or attractive. One informant, a man of about forty years of age was observed in almost constant prayer for a whole week preparing for his first night of virgin marriage which very nearly ended in failure, only succeeding on the second attempt with the aid of magical devices.

593 This is often accompanied by a
595 more rapid turnover in other wives who tend to resent the close re-
• 586 lationship of the longer term wife with the common husband.

4. Status of Wife's Family

593 Among marriages where the woman or girl has come from a
565 higher ranking family than the man's, the woman has a potential lever which she may use to ameliorate male dominance. She realises that her husband's connection to her family is one of the foundations of his social status and ease of divorce makes her connecting function some-
[602] what tenuous. On the other hand, her family may be interested in maintaining their relationship with her husband, and thus attempt to limit her behaviour to a position more in line with cultural ideal of submissiveness, in order to keep her husband satisfied, as well as honouring their own positions as givers of not just wives but of "good" wives.

5. Personality Factors

593 Needless to say, the particular personality make-up of the
156 husband and wife helps determine whether or not the traditional pattern of male dominance is possible. Fearful, timid, submissive men do not make strong, dominating husbands, while independent, strong-willed women do not easily become subservient, humble and docile wives. The cultural pattern may be reacted to in different ways. It is anxiety provoking to those men who fail, or are afraid of being unable to dominate, while it may serve as an outlet for aggression and hostility on the part of disappointed men who have failed elsewhere in their lives.

6. Socio-Economic Status of the Husband

593 As was noted above, a man needs a wife to cook his food and
557 return hospitality, as well as to provide food for men who have no wives, which helps create obligatory relationships for the male. The

837 established small wards and hamlets are the bases of networks of re-
628 lationships among the males. Men tend to find extra-marital partners in wards, hamlets, and towns other than their own, within the marketing community, since the women of their own ward or hamlet are usually the wives of their close friends and relatives.

• 586 It must not be supposed from the above discussion that there is any positive evaluation of divorce in Kanuri culture. On the contrary, long marriages are valued and divorce is considered by many to
[123] be a melancholy breakdown of relationship. Thus the writer was asked on numerous occasions to use his prestige in the community in order to re-unite separated couples.

581 This desire for long marriages is expressed ritually at the
585 formalization ceremony (sada'a) on the day of the marriage. After the fatiha[1] prayer has been said by the assembled males, it is customary for
[829] the person who has been married the longest to stand up first. If a European is present he fills the function, not because of his superior status, but because European marriages are well known for their durability. Informants stated that this little ritual was an expression of hope and a blessing on the present marriage for its long duration.

581 Personality factors, mutual affection and trust, preferential marriage, economic benefits, prestige accorded by the union to either party and/or their families can all contribute to the stability of marriage. Furthermore, it may be generalized that the longer the
586 term of marriage between a man and a woman, the greater the chance that their marriage will continue. Most divorces seem to take place in the first two years of marriage for non-virgin marriages, and after about four to five years in the case of first marriages (of females).

(1) The first verse of the Koran.

586 Nevertheless the incidence of divorce is very high and only exceptional women marry as virgins and remain married all their lives to the same man, while practically all men divorce a wife at least once in their lives. The average figure is about three to four divorces per person (from qualitative observation and genealogical records) during a life span. The reasons given for divorce run the complete gamut of dissatisfaction that a man and a woman can complain of in their relations with one another.(1) Furthermore divorce is very easy to institute, being merely an act of personal will by either partner to the marriage.

[692] A great many divorces are practised without resort to the formal proceedings of the Alkalai court. The woman leaves her husband's compound taking her property with her and returns (traditionally) to her luwali's (guardian) household, which usually means her parents. As we have said before, this is not always the case in later marriages. If the husband wants her back, he sends an intermediary to the house to which she has returned to plead his case. If he does not, then an intermediary may be sent from the house to which the girl has gone. This latter procedure is much less usual, since the girl's family is traditionally of higher status, and it is customary for the lower status group to visit the higher and not vice versa. If no intermediaries are used it is assumed that both parties desire a divorce, or if they are used and fail to obtain a reconciliation, then [627] divorce follows. If any adjudication is required in the proceedings, [692] it is most commonly carried on by relatives, friends, ward heads and town heads.

[171] (1) c.f. Smith, M.G., op.cit. (1955) (p.63). Smith gives a list of complaints obtained from Hausa court records of divorce. All of his list of sixty-three complaints are applicable to Kanuri court proceedings on divorce.

586 town heads. Resort to higher courts occurs only in cases where settle-
692 ment by these local adjudicators is refused by one or both of the parties. This usually happens in the following instances: (1) annulment cases where there is a failure at consummation of the marriage; (2) when a man wants the return of the bridewealth because of his wife's request for a divorce only a few months after the wedding; (3) when there has been a beating which draws blood, thereby involving the litigants in an argument over blood money which must be paid by the assailant to the injured party and his/her family; (4) when any matter becomes so contentious as to be impossible to reconcile with the immediate help of relatives, friends, and local leaders.

586 Informants claimed that at least half of all divorces resulted in the remarriage of the couple. In light of the large number of divorces, this statement seemed contradictory to the observed facts
[192] at first glance. However, the Kanuri word for divorce (dəunyin) really means "to leave a spouse", i.e. it makes no distinction between divorce and separation in its semantic reference, which is an accurate description of the facts, since all divorces begin as separations. When viewed in this light the informants' statements make sense, since many separated couples are re-united. The reunion of a man with his separated wife was described as being very informal and inexpensive. He merely gives a small gift to the woman and the relatives (sometimes) with whom she is staying, and she returns to his compound without ceremony. There is, however, a limit to the number of times a man and woman may separate and re-unite. The third time a woman leaves her husband's compound, she does so in the knowledge that return is impossible under the terms of Kanuri law. That is to say, after the first and

• 586 second separation reconciliation is possible, while the third constitutes an irrevocable separation, i.e. a divorce.

Among the manifold particularistic reasons for divorce, two major categories of dissatisfaction may be isolated. The first can be labelled "functional disputes". The woman complains that the man does not give her enough market money, or he does not like her, or he wants too much or too little sexual intercourse, while the man complains that the woman does not cook well, or enough, or on time, or does not perform some other womanly task properly. Sometimes, these may be real issues, at other times they serve as excuses for some other dissatisfactions which the man or woman may not want to make public. The second category has already been referred to in the discussion of male dominance. The behavioural responses by men and women to the cultural ideology of male dominance causes much dissatisfaction. The male complains that his wife has done something or continues to do something that he has repeatedly told her not to do, while the woman complains that her husband will not allow her to do things which she proclaims to be her right, such as visiting her parents, or going to a friend's house to have her hair done. The most common male complaints in this vein are, (a) "she goes to dances", or (b) "she will not stay in the house". The first of these (a) implies that the woman likes to go out at night against her husband's wishes to an activity that no man likes his wife to attend, since it is a common time and place for sexual liaisons to be made, or at the very least, for the advertisement of sexual charms. The second (b) is more general in that it includes the first, and refers to a generalized insubordination on the part of the wife.

000 The discussion of marriage has served to illustrate Kanuri

58 sada'abe) in which a girl is given to a Koranic mallam also entails the mutual understanding of an obligatory subordination by the mallam to the luwali.

Secondly, in marriages of agreement (nyia ardiabe) and discovery (nyia kolatabe), the major arrangements are made between the man and the woman alone without recourse or subordination to a household head. These marriages illustrate the adaptation of marriage arrangements to the realities of Kanuri social life. Given the large population and the high divorce rate it is not possible or feasible for all weddings to function as mechanisms for strengthening and creating superior/subordinate relationships. And so this second variety of marriage arrangement operates because many women, especially as they grow older, are not willing to be pawns used for the purpose of defining relationships between men. By the same token, many men are not willing to become obligated to others through marriage.

593 In the marriage relationship itself, there is a conflict
183 between the subordination that most Kanuri men expect of their wives and what they actually experience. It is held that this conflict is due to the woman's ability to subvert the cultural ideal of male dominance through his dependence upon her for much of his own status in
[565] the community. This is less true among the upper classes where the
[586] man is less dependent upon the woman for his status, and at this level there are few divorces.

885 562 described in other terms. The main distinctions for women are, fero (girl), Kamu (woman) and Kamursu (old woman). A woman (kamu) can be given descriptive attributes to place her properly in people's minds. For example, she can be kamu kwanzə mboji (a woman with a husband, i.e. married), or ganzə ngubu or gana (older or younger). These can be extended to include statuses such as having borne children or not, having an influential family, having a rich husband, being in seclusion and so on.

There is no similar status term among women comparable to the male term rashidi whose meaning also connotes or embodies the ideology of mature behaviour.

The ideal view of the adult female role positively evaluates marriage, durability of marriage, children, obedience to husband, proper and efficient performance of women's tasks, chastity, staying in husband's compound much of the time, and maintaining some contact with her own family as some of the more important goals towards which 183 adult females should strive. In actual practice, women who divorce 885 the least number of times give their unqualified support to the cultur- 562 al ideal of the female role. On the other hand, women who divorce • 586 easily and frequently tend to qualify their support of the ideal. This contrast is illustrated by the answer to the question, "What would you do if your husband required you to stay always in the compound?" A woman, who had been married to the same man for twenty-five years, answered simply, shi kura fatobe (he is the head of the household), i.e. he is my authoritative superior and I must obey. Contrarily, a woman, who at the age of about thirty-five had married and divorced four times, replied, daji lenyin (then I would go away), i.e. divorce him.

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[586] The value placed upon maintenance of connection with her own family after marriage is given by women as one of the reasons for divorce - "he would not let me visit my family" - which indicates that this value is somewhat in conflict with the other value attributes of adult female behaviour during marriage. In some marriages of long duration and much mutual trust, the woman's visits to her relatives were observed to be a normal, accepted and non-conflicting part of her role as wife to her husband. However, most men are somewhat reluctant to allow their wives to visit relatives and try to discourage such activity. High ranking persons send along a trusted servant to remain with or near their wives during the entire term of
[[52]] absence from the compound. One informant, by no means an exception, became incensed because he heard that his wife (age about thirty-five, married and divorced several times before) who was travelling alone to Maiduguri to visit a sister, had stopped for two days in an intermediate town to visit other relatives and friends. A former husband of the woman lived there and the present husband was extremely worried lest his wife was having a licentious time while away.

Old Age

886 Old age is signalled by white hair for both sexes. Even though sexual potency may remain, this outward sign of white hair identifies the coming of the last period of life for both men (chiari,
888 old man) and women (kamursu, old woman). In both sexes old age means the relinquishing of some of the duties of adulthood though the man continues longer in his adult role than the woman. This is due to the increasing difficulty which an old woman finds in obtaining a husband if she has been widowed or divorced in later years. If she has a son he is expected to keep her in his compound; if not, she may

241 433 upon his farm production. One cultivator, a subordinate of the District Head, illustrated this point when he remarked that he had been given some good land by his superior. He told how his tax collection duties which took him away during the rainy season had severely limited his ability to farm. Furthermore, as a comparative newcomer to the town, and a supporter of such a politically powerful man as the DH he was not welcome in a co-operative work group, and had no subordinates or kinsmen in his own compound to care for the crops in his absence.

241 464 [586] The number of wives a cultivator has available for work is a major factor in crop production. The high divorce rate makes this primary source of labour unpredictable for each farmer from year to [571] year.(1) Numbers and nature of bèrzum subordinates again help determine the labour supply. If a man has many followers, his labour source is large and secure; if he has few or none, his labour problem is a limiting one in crop production. Membership in a co-operative work group [476] (serwa) may, however, help to alleviate labour problems for some, and about 60% of the farmers and craftsmen and 35% of the trader and political and religious specialists, use this source of supply.(2) Finally, for those who can afford wage labour, at a price per crop, or on daily salaries, such is generally available in all but the smallest towns of Bornu.

[434] The difficulty is that most peasant households are numerically small, and have little liquid capital. This limits the secure availability of labour to those with stable marriage relations, or to those with long and fruitful social relations in one place, i.e. kinship ties or working bèrzum relationships with others in the same locality are

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(1) See Cohen, R., Marriage Instability and its Determinants Among the Kanuri of Northern Nigeria, (1958) (unpublished).
(2) See below p. 305.

593 In the marriage relationship itself there is a conflict
183 between what most Kanuri men expect of their wives - that is to say, subordination - and what they actually experience. It is held that this conflict is due to the woman's ability to subvert the cultural ideal of male dominance through his dependence upon her for much of
[565] his own status in the community. This is less true among the upper
[586] classes where the man is less dependent upon the woman for his status, and at this level there are fewer divorces.

571 The discussion of the Kanuri life cycle along with the material on kinship and marriage has been designed to give a description on interpersonal relations. Although the whole fabric of Kanuri society operates at once, the large scaled structural features of the society are linked behaviourally by these patterns of interpersonal relations. At the level of social stratification, political and economic organization, the organizational patterns of the total society must be seen as operating through and with the modes of interpersonal relations.

561 In the life cycle, we have seen how age statuses are only roughly correlated with the physiological phases of growth, maturity and decline. They are more precisely defined in terms of sequences of skills to be learned and tests to be passed during the lives of individuals.

858 During the first eighteen months of life the infant (tiful) is introduced into the company of its family within the context of Kanuri culture. This period sets in motion the learning experiences which guide the new member into full adult participation in the society. Until the end of the tiful stage the individual is treated gently and permissively, and socialization pressure is at a minimum. The tiful